

What's New in the MPDC

February 5, 2001

MPDC REPORTS DRAMATIC REDUCTIONS IN POLICE-INVOLVED SHOOTINGS

In the two years since the MPDC overhauled its use-of-force policies, enhanced officer training and equipment, and strengthened investigations and data analysis, the number of persons shot by Metropolitan Police officers has plunged 78 percent. According to statistics compiled by the Department's Force Investigation Team (FIT), MPDC officers in 1998 shot a total of 32 suspects; 12 were killed and 20 injured. In the year 2000, by contrast, seven suspects were shot by police, only one fatally. That translates into a 78 percent reduction in persons shot and a 92 percent drop in fatalities. Figures also show dramatic reductions in the number of firearm discharges and rounds fired by officers. The improvements follow changes Chief Ramsey initiated in November 1998, including a new use-of-force policy that established a progressive "use of force continuum" to be followed by officers in response to resistant or dangerous individuals. The Department also implemented new training programs, issued new less-than-lethal equipment, and strengthened investigatory procedures. More detailed information about the reductions in police use of force can be found at:

<http://www.mpdc.org/> (click on News)

In addition to the reduction in officer-involved shootings, the MPDC reported last week that the number of citizen complaints against officers, including allegations of excessive force, fell sharply last year as well. Between 1999 and 2000, allegations of excessive force declined by 36 percent, and allegations of rudeness by officers fell by 53 percent, according to the Department's Office of Professional Responsibility. Allegations of poor police service were reduced by 45 percent last year, while mishandled property allegations declined 21 percent during the same period. Additional information on how citizen complaints are reported and investigated is available on the Web at:

<http://www.mpdc.org/>
(click on Services and Programs)

MPDC KICKS OFF CITYWIDE SURVEY OF CRIME VICTIMS

The MPDC is teaming up with the DC Superior Court to make eligible crime victims more aware of the District's Crime Victim Compensation Program. This program provides certain types of financial assistance for qualifying victims for such expenses as uncovered medical treatment, funeral expenses, lost wages, etc. Complete information about the Victim Compensation Program, including a downloadable copy of the application form, is available on the MPDC Web site at:

<http://www.mpdc.org/>
(click on Services and Programs)

To help police better understand the needs of crime victims in DC and measure their satisfaction with police services, the MPDC launched a citywide survey of recent crime victims on Friday, February 2. The telephone survey is expected to last three weeks, with interviewers planning to contact a sample of approximately 1,000 people who were the victims of robbery, assault, burglary, auto theft and arson during the months of November and December, 2000. (Because of the sensitive nature of homicide, sexual assault and domestic violence, the MPDC will be conducting a special survey with victims and survivors of these crimes.) Calls will be made during the evening and on Saturdays by MPDC recruits who have been specially trained in administering the victim questionnaire. Respondents will be asked questions concerning the demeanor of police officers, the assistance that was offered, feelings of safety and satisfaction, and suggestions for improvement. All responses will be kept confidential. Learn more about the survey at:

<http://www.mpdc.org/> (click on News)

UPCOMING IN DC: NBA ALL-STAR WEEK

The National Basketball Association will hold its annual All-Star at the MCI Center in downtown DC on the evening of Sunday, February 11. But All-Star activities, including the NBA All-Star Jam Session, will take place the entire week, beginning on Wednesday the 7th. Many of these activities will add to vehicular and pedestrian traffic in the downtown area around the MCI Center, the Washington Convention Center and other locations. Residents and visitors are advised to listen to radio and TV traffic reports and to use extra caution in the areas around All-Star activities. Specific street closings will also be posted on the MPDC Web site. For more information about NBA All-Star activities in DC, go to:

<http://www.nba.com/allstar2001/>

SAFETY TIPS FOR RUNNERS, WALKERS, CYCLISTS AND OTHER OUTDOOR ENTHUSIASTS

The recent incident in which a female jogger was attacked and left for dead alongside a path in Montgomery County has raised safety concerns among runners and other outdoor enthusiasts throughout the region. While it is impossible to guarantee that these types of incidents will never happen, there are some common-sense measures that runners, walkers, cyclists and other outdoor enthusiasts can take to protect themselves and reduce their risk of being the victim of an injury or a serious accident. For example, people should avoid wearing headphones while exercising outdoors, because headphones prevent you from hearing what's going on around you. Other tips: always wear reflective clothing when it's dark, carry a cell phone if possible, and tell a family member or friend where you are going and when you will return. For a complete list of safety tips for runners, walkers and others, click on:

If your community group would like printed materials or a presentation on safety tips for runners and walkers – or on any other crime prevention topic – contact the MPDC Community Outreach Section at 202-727-2662 or e-mail: RaiHowell@excite.com.

<http://www.mpdc.org/> (click on Safety Tips)

QUICK GUIDE TO CONTACTING THE MPDC

Need to call a specific police district or a specialized unit such as Harbor Patrol, the Prostitution Unit or the Chief's office? Want to know about MPDC's various toll-free hotlines – CrimeSolvers, hate crimes or corruption? Unsure about when to call 9-1-1 vs. 3-1-1, the MPDC's non-emergency number? This information and more is available on-line through the Quick Guide to Contacting the MPDC:

If you or your group would like to receive informational materials about 3-1-1 – including brochures, flyers, refrigerator magnets and stickers – call 202-727-9346 or e-mail: kmorison_mpdc@excite.com.

<http://www.mpdc.org/> (click on Telephone Directory)

Information, ideas or comments about this service?

E-mail Kevin Morison, MPDC's Director of Corporate Communications, at kmorison_mpdc@excite.com.

Would you like to have this information emailed to you? Just go to our web site and register with crimereports.com.

Metropolitan Police Department Web Page
<http://www.mpdc.org>